



February 19, 2018

House Committee on Revenue
State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Barnhart and Representatives,

Re: 4007A

Children First represents the interests of Oregon's 880,000 children and believes that together, with communities and leaders across the state, we can build a state where all children thrive. Beginning in 2015, Children First has worked with our partners to identify legislative proposals that will help achieve that vision. Increasing the document recording fee as included in HB 4007A is part of the 2018 Children's Agenda. Children First supports increasing the document recording fee so needed funds can be devoted to affordable housing, allowing more children to have the housing they need.

In the Oregon Department of Education report released last November, more than 22,000 K-12 students lacked a "fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence." This number represents almost 4% of the entire school age population. This means, on average, there is one student in every classroom of 26 students that lacks a place they can call home on a regular basis. The number of homeless school age children has increased every year since 2012 and is now at its highest level ever, exceeding the numbers seen during the recent recession.

The uncertainty and accompanying poverty put students under such strain that they are much more likely to exhibit learning disabilities. Formerly homeless students score below low-income peers with no housing instability in math and English tests. Poverty alone cannot explain the impact of homelessness on student achievement. While the funds raised by this document fee increase will not solve the housing problem for all these children, it is the start that they desperately need.

We ask for your support for HB 4007A to increase the document recording fee to increase resources available for emergency rent assistance, homeownership accessibility, and building more affordable homes.

Sincerely,
James Barta
Strategic Director